

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 5817

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP, US

SUBJECT: MILITARY BASE NEGOTIATIONS

1. IN CONVERSATIONS WHICH I HAVE HAD WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS AND SECRETARY ROMULO SINCE MY RETURN TO MANILA FROM WASHINGTON, I HAVE PURSUED QUESTION OF STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY BASES AGREEMENT.

2. DURING THESE DISCUSSIONS, I HAVE INDICATED USG CHANGE OF VIEW CONCERNING DESIRABLE TIMING FOR SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT AND ITS SUBMISSION TO U.S. CONGRESS. CONTRARY TO EARLIER VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO WAIT FOR NEW CONGRESS IN 1977, WE NOW FEEL IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO SIGN AGREEMENT THIS SUMMER AND SUBMIT IT TO CURRENT CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER 1976. PRESIDENT MARCOS AGREES, IN PRINCIPLE, THAT THIS SHOULD BE DONE.

3. I HAVE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER IS PREPARED TO COME TO MANILA IN THE FIRST PART OF AUGUST, AFTER THE ANZUS MEETING, TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT IF WE
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HAVE IT READY AT THAT TIME. THE AGREEMENT WOULD BE IN

THE FORM OF AN EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT, BUT WOULD BE SENT TO THE CONGRESS FOR APPROVAL BY JOINT RESOLUTION. MARCOS FOUND THIS SATISFACTORY.

4. AS FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS HERE IN PHILIPPINES, I HAVE SOUGHT INFORMATION ON PHILIPPINE INTENTIONS AS TO LOCALE AND NEGOTIATING TEAM. BOTH MARCOS AND ROMULO HAVE EXPRESSED PREFERENCE FOR BAGUIO AS NEGOTIATING LOCALE AND HAVE TOLD ME THAT PHILIPPINE TEAM WILL BE HEADED BY PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON EDUARDO ROMUALDEZ, BUT WILL INCLUDE FORMER VICE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN SECRETARY MANUEL PELAEZ. THE TIMING IS FIXED RATHER VAGUELY FOR "EARLY JUNE". I WILL ATTEMPT TO REFINE THIS FURTHER IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

5. PRESIDENT MARCOS SAID THAT PRINCIPAL ISSUE SEEMS TO BE QUESTION OF "COMPENSATION." HE SAID SOMEWHAT ELLIPTICALLY THAT THERE ARE TWO ELEMENTS IN THE FINANCIAL AREA. FIRST IS THE COST OF OPERATING THE BASES, "WHICH FILIPINOS CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY." AND SECOND IS THE PHILIPPINE NEED FOR AID IN UPGRADING THEIR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. HE HOPED, HOWEVER, WE COULD WORK OUT A FORMULA WHICH DID NOT LOOK LIKE A "HANDOUT PROGRAM." ALTHOUGH I AM INTRIGUED BY THIS PHRASING, I DID NOT PURSUE IT FURTHER BECAUSE I WANT TO EXAMINE ITS MEANING WITH SOME OTHER INTERLOCUTORS BEFORE GETTING MARCOS TOO INDELIBLY ON THE RECORD ON THIS SUBJECT.

6. FINALLY, I TOLD MARCOS WE APPRECIATED WORD HE HAD SENT TO PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY THAT HE WISHED AVOID CONTENTION IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH SHOULD PROCEED AS DISCUSSIONS AMONG FRIENDS. I INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THIS WORD COULD ALSO BE PASSED TO SOME OF THE PHILIPPINE OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BEEN MAKING SOMEWHAT PROVOCATIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE BASES IN RECENT DAYS. MARCOS SAID HE WOULD ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS SUBORDINATES TO CUT OUT THE ROUGH COMMENTARY.

7. COMMENT: WE WILL OBSERVE WHETHER THE SNIPING WILL STOP. IF IT DOES, IT MAY MEAN THE PHILIPPINES IS
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REASONABLY SATISFIED WITH THE DRAFT TEXT WE HAVE TABLED.
SULLIVAN

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